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LONDON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12 (AP) -- THE LONDON DAILY MAIL SAID TODAY U-2 PILOT

GARY FRANCIS POWERS WILL BE FREED FROM A SOVIET PRISON IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND WILL CHOSE TO STAY IN RUSSIA.

THE MAIL'S MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT JOHN MOSSMAN REPORTED:

"I UNDERSTAND HE WOULD LIKE HIS WIFE BARBARA TO JOIN HIM, AND SHE IS ANXIOUS TO COME HERE."

THE MAIL SAID POWERS PROBABLY WILL WALK TO FREEDOM MAY 1 -- EXACTLY A YEAR AFTER HIS RECONNAISSANCE PLANE WAS SHOT DOWN.

AND THE NEWSPAPER QUOTED MRS. POWERS AS SAYING IN NEW YORK:

"I WOULD LOVE TO GO TO MOSCOW TO JOIN MY HUSBAND. I WILL GO OUT TO HIM IF POSSIBLE, EVEN IF HE DECIDED TO STAY ON AFTER HIS RELEASE."

MOSSMAN QUOTED NO RUSSIAN SOURCE FOR HIS STORY, BUT REPORTED:

"HE (POWERS) IS BELIEVED TO BE IN VLADIMIR PRISON, NEAR MOSCOW. HIS RELEASE IS PLANNED AS A DEMONSTRATION OF INCREASED GOOD WILL BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND AMERICA."

THE MAIL SAID MRS. POWERS TELEPHONED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON AFTER GETTING A LETTER FROM HER HUSBAND.

"YES, I HAVE HEARD GARY IS TO BE RELEASED. THAT IS WHY I TELEPHONED WASHINGTON TO TALK TO THEM ABOUT IT," SHE WAS QUOTED. "I HAVE HAD NOTHING OFFICIAL TO CONFIRM THE RUMORS. BUT I HAD A LOVELY LETTER FROM GARY ONLY THIS MORNING. I HAVE ALREADY TOLD HIM I WOULD GO TO MOSCOW TO JOIN HIM.

"GARY TOLD ME IN THIS MORNING'S LETTER THAT HE WOULD BE VERY HAPPY FOR ME TO BE WITH HIM. I HAVE BEEN READING LOTS AND LOTS OF PAMPHLETS AND BOOKS AND EVERYTHING I CAN ON THE SOVIET UNION AND WHAT A WIFE IS ALLOWED TO DO."

THE MAIL SAID MRS. POWERS ADDED:

"OF COURSE HE IS LONELY AND SO AM I. GARY IS AT PRESENT LIMITED TO SENDING FOUR

CPYRGHT

LETTERS A MONTH, AND THAT INCLUDES LETTERS TO HIS PARENTS AND SISTERS.

"I HAVE BEEN GETTING ONE EACH MONTH. IT'S DIFFICULT FOR HIS FIVE SISTERS -- HE HAS TO PICK ONE OF THEM EACH MONTH TO WRITE TO.

"WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD SO MUCH TO BEING TOGETHER SOON."

BUT TONIGHT MRS. POWERS DISCOUNTED AS A WILD RUMOR THE REPORT THAT HER HUSBAND MAY SOON BE RELEASED.

IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW FROM HER MOTHER'S HOME IN MILLEDGEVILLE, GA., SHE SAID:

"AS FAR AS I KNOW, THE REPORT IS INCORRECT. NEITHER MY HUSBAND NOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS SAID ANYTHING ABOUT IT. NATURALLY I FEEL VERY BADLY THAT IT IS NOT TRUE."

MRS. POWERS SAID RUSSIA HAS VARIOUS POLICIES REGARDING FAMILIES OF PRISONERS AND "WE DON'T KNOW WHERE WE FIT IN YET."

A U.S. EMBASSY SPOKESMAN IN MOSCOW SAYS HE HAS NO INFORMATION ABOUT THE REPORTS. THE FLIER'S FATHER, OLIVER POWERS, ALSO SAYS HE HAS RECEIVED NO WORD ABOUT THE REPORTED RELEASE OF HIS SON.

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